**War Studies Primer -- First Year Seminar 420:029:022 -- Fall 2011 Essays – Final Version 11/18/2011**

**Guide to Essay Writing**

Essays submitted in the course should be (a) in no larger than a 12 point font, (b) double-spaced, (c) have 1 inch margins all around, (d) no more than 2 pages in length, and (e) submitted in PDF or .doc format to my e-mail address or to myself in class.

The essay should be illustrated with examples drawn from class readings and discussions.

Each essay should consist of at least 5 paragraphs: an introductory paragraph, 3 body paragraphs, and a conclusion paragraph.

A paragraph is a group of sentences organized around one complete thought which is stated in the topic sentence.

**Jerry Pournelle on writing:**

Once you have learned to write good sentences, sit down and write. When my sons began to write essays -- term papers, originally I suppose -- I told each in turn the same thing. Write everything you can think of about the subject. Everything.

Now go through and list the topic sentence of each paragraph. If you find paragraphs that don't have a topic sentence, you have a problem: fix that. If you don't know what a paragraph is, and have no notion of topic sentences, get that corrected at once. (Just read on.) Once you have that list of topic sentences, decide if that's really the order you want to present the information in. It probably won't be. Organize the way you want it.

Fill in the gaps, expand points that need expanding, and do one final rewrite pass. Voila. If this is a term paper you will probably get an A if you knew anything at all about the subject. If you're writing for sale, you probably need more feel for how such things are organized in the publication you are aiming for. Study your market. But recall the technique: it will serve you well for a long time.

On Paragraphs: I once had to tell a co-author (Not Niven) what a paragraph was. He kept handing me material that was dramatic but paragraphed horribly. Finally I asked what he thought he was doing, and he confessed that no one had ever taught him what a paragraph is.

"A paragraph," I said, "is a group of sentences organized around one complete thought which is stated in the topic sentence."

It was as if a light had appeared his head. He now paragraphs well. Of course in fiction, characters don't always speak in paragraphs, nor do they organize what they are saying very coherently; still, you will find that characters in fiction do and must speak a lot more coherently than people do in real life. Real conversation transcribed is sometimes incomprehensible, usually ungrammatical, and often boring.

**Essay Topics - Choose One**

1. How do you provoke a war?

2. How do you avoid a war? / How do you prevent a war?

3. How and why do wars start? / What are the causes of war?

4. How and why do wars end?

5. Why do people fight?

6. Can wars be just?

7. Why do people surrender?

8. How do you win a war?

9. How do you lose a war?

10. Is it always clear who won a war?

11. What happens after wars?

12. How were wars fought in the past?

13. How will wars be fought in the future?

14. In what ways can war be conducted in a moral manner? / Are there rules to the conduct of war?

15. How will the new challenge of peacekeeping affect the armed forces?

16. How will the information revolution affect the use of armed force?

17. How have developments in modern society affected the military profession?

18. Can lessons from history facilitate our understanding of contemporary conflicts and assessment of future risks?

19. How has the character of warfare changed over time?

20. Are there basic principles which should shape the conduct of war if it is to be successfully prosecuted?

21. Militant Islam

Using everything you have learned:

Devise a grand strategy to identify the centers of gravity of militant Islam, neutralize these centers of gravity, and connect with the moderate Islamic

world…all non-kinetically

[Create a plan for destroying Islamo-fascism non-kinetically]

22. Hawaiian 4th Generation Warfare

You are a member of the Hawaiian sovereignty movement and have decided on a course of violence to attain your goal of restoring Hawaiian

independence

Design a 4th Generation Warfare strategy for freeing the Hawaiian Islands from American occupation

23. Iran Takedown

Create a strategic plan to overthrow the Iranian government and replace it with a government friendly to the US

Begin with a rationale for action

Cover training needed

Use any or all of the forces we have discussed

Land / sea / air / space / information / diplomacy

Cover logistics required

Cover intelligence needs

What is your desired end state / when will you have won?

24. Managing the Peaceful Rise of a democratic China

As the United States, using everything you have learned

Devise a grand strategy to identify the centers of gravity of the Chinese Communist Party, neutralize these centers of gravity, and connect with the

democratic Chinese world…all non-kinetically

[Create a plan for destroying the Chinese Communist Party non-kinetically]

25. Ensuring the fall of the United States

As China, using everything you have learned

Devise a grand strategy to identify the centers of gravity of the United States, neutralize these centers of gravity, and ensure the United States loses

its superpower status…all non-kinetically

[Create a plan for destroying the United States non-kinetically]

26. Operation Other Than War

Create an operational plan to perform an operation other than war on a recent humanitarian crisis of your choice, following General Zinni's rules for

conducting operations other than war

27. Use the Star Wars saga (Episodes 1-6) to explore the rise and fall of a civilization and empire

28. Attempt to answer the question: Why did the West conquer the rest?

- or more specifically -

Why did a tiny group of islands off the northwest coast of Europe manage to rule a quarter of the Earth's population and territory?

29. For the class simulation please explain:

Your role

Your actions

What you learned from your individual actions in relation to what you learned from the course

What you learned from your team's actions overall in relation to what you learned from the course

One possible way to frame this would be to address some of the Learning Objectives of This Course / War Frequently Asked Questions (in Lecture 1) in

relation to the simulation